

PATENT  
10/039,956  
Docket 091/009

REMARKS

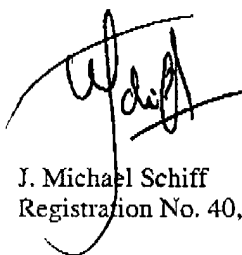
Claims 23-29 have been cancelled. Claims 30 and 31 have been rewritten in independent form to incorporate the features of previous claim 23. Entry of the claim amendments does not introduce new matter into the disclosure.

The amendment to the claims is voluntary and made to avoid overlap with claims under examination in copending application 10/217,252. Claims 30 and 31 do not pose an overlap, since subject matter corresponding to claims 30 and 31 were subject to a restriction requirement in the 10/217,252 application on November 28, 2001, and have not been rejoined into that application.

No fee is believed payable with respect to this Amendment. The total number of claims was previously 36, and is now 29. The number of independent claims was previously 13, and is still 13.

Nevertheless, should the Patent Office determine that any fee is required for further consideration of the application, the Assistant Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge such fee (or credit any overpayment) to Deposit Account No. 07-1139, referencing the docket number indicated above.

Respectfully submitted,



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